

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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AGR-05 INT-05 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 /085 W

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R 122130Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4183

INFO ALL US CONSULATES IN MEXICO VIA POUCH

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT MX SOCI

SUBJECT: LAND INVASIONS WORRY GOM

REF: A) HERMOSILLO 119, B) MEXICO A-101

1. REF A DESCRIBED CURRENT SITUATION IN SONORA AS ONE WHICH HAD AGAIN REACHED CRISIS PROPORTIONS. ALTHOUGH SITUATION IN NORTHWEST AGRICULTURAL REGION APPEARS TO BE THE MOST SERIOUS, INVASIONS ARE ALSO REPORTED IN THE "BAJIO" REGION OF GUANAJUATO AND JALISCO, WHERE EVEN A SECRETARIAT OF AGRICULTURE RESEARCH STATION HAS BEEN INVADED, IN MORELOS, AND IN VERACRUZ, WHERE THE STATE GOVERNOR LAST WEEK ASKED THE ARMY'S HELP IN PREVENTING CAMPESINOS FROM ARMING THEMSELVES.

2. SITUATION IS CAUSING GOM SERIOUS CONCERN. IN LAST TWO DAYS BOTH PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA AND PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE LOPEZ PORTILLO HAVE CALLED ON CAMPESINO ORGANIZATIONS TO REJECT VIOLENCE AS A MEANS OF SATISFYING ANCIENT DEMANDS FOR MORE LAND. "NEVER BEFORE", SAID JLP IN HEADLINED SPEECH, "HAVE WE BEEN SO CLOSE TO WIDESPREAD VIOLENCE". WHILE RECOGNIZING THAT INVASIONS HAVE A SIX YEAR "CYCLICAL" CHARACTER, LOPEZ PORTILLO SAID THAT THE CURRENT WAVE OF LAND INVASIONS IS THE WORST YET AND THAT AGRICULTURAL

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PRODUCTION IS THREATENED, A JUDGEMENT EXPRESSED PRIVATELY

TO EMBASSY OFFICERS BY NOBEL PRIZE WINNER NORMAN BORLAUG
AFTER A VISIT TO SONORA TWO WEEKS AGO. (REF B.)

3. COMMENT: GOM SEEMS NOT TO KNOW WHAT TO DO ABOUT THE
LAND INVASION PROBLEM. ITS EFFORTS OVER LAST FIVE MONTHS
TO CONTAIN IT HAVE APPEARANCE OF TIME BUYING MEASURES.
ECHEVERRIA UNDERSTANDABLY WANTS TO LEAVE OFFICE WITHOUT
HAVING TO RESORT TO FORCE TO UPHOLD LAW, BUT THE TIME
WORN FORMULA OF DISPATCHING CABINET MINISTERS TO SCENE
TO "DIALOGUE" WITH LAND INVADERS WEARS THIN INDEED WITH
CAMPESEINOS WHO SAY THEIR GRIEVANCES ARE THIRY FIVE YEARS
OLD.
THOMPSON

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